

# LutheranWoman

November 2010

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Leaders: Born, Called, Caught  
Corinth in the Time of Paul  
Thanks Be To God!

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**Editor** Kate Sprutta Elliott  
**Managing Editor** Terri Lackey  
**Editor, Café** Elizabeth McBride

**Art Direction** On Track Marketing  
**Cover** Moodboard Photography  
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## ENTRUSTED WITH MUCH

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VOICES

## Entrusted with Much

by Kate Sprutta Elliott

**In November we are** reminded of how much we have been given, and we are grateful. The month starts with All Saints Day, when we remember and celebrate those who have gone before us in the faith. Near the end of the month, we mark Thanksgiving, when we remember and celebrate all the blessings of this life—especially the abundant harvest of this good earth. The month is hemmed by occasions that inspire memories, reflection, and gratitude. Out of divine generosity, God has entrusted us with much.

The opening prayer of this month's Bible study session begins with "O God, our creator and our provider, what a position of trust you have carved out for us!" This session takes on the topic of stewardship, something that makes many people uncomfortable because they hear *stewardship* and think *money*. But the writers help us explore the subject in a way that makes it clear that stewardship is about more than money. It's about taking care of that which has been entrusted to us by God. It's about being a servant and a leader.

In "Leaders: Born, Called, or Caught," Kathryn Haueisen reminds us that, "We never know when we may be called upon to serve as a leader. God has created each of us with the capacity to lead when called upon to do so." Haueisen encourages us to step up when a leader is needed. And she explores how we can nurture the leaders among us.

One critical aspect of leadership is knowing how to use resources to make

an impact—including financial resources. Kathleen Kastilahn writes about women's philanthropy in "What Gives?" She reminds us that "... when you do give to those things you should care about, it's true that your heart will lead you in caring. Responding generously becomes second nature."

In this issue we also take time to remember those who pour out their lives in service through ELCA global mission. In "Thanks Be To God!" Sue Edison Swift shares stories from missionaries around the world and tells us how we too can be part of Operation Thanksgiving, an ELCA global mission project that sends handmade Thanksgiving cards to missionaries. This would be a great way for you (or your circle) to encourage the saints far from home.

One of my favorite hymns is "In the Day of our Thanksgiving" by Henry William Draper. It seems especially appropriate at this time of year. It begins: "In our day of thanksgiving one psalm let us offer for the saints who before us have found their reward" and later continues "These stones that have echoed their praises are holy, and dear is the ground where their feet have once trod; yet here they confessed they were strangers and pilgrims, and still they were seeking the city of God."

Dear readers, we count you among the saints, and to paraphrase St. Paul, we thank God every time we think of you (Philippians 1:3). 🌿

**Kate Sprutta Elliott** is editor of *Lutheran Woman Today*. You may write to her at [LWT@elca.org](mailto:LWT@elca.org).





GIVE US THIS DAY

## Ability to Balance

by Julie A. Kanarr

### After I broke my ankle

earlier this year, I spent time doing physical therapy to regain balance, flexibility, and strength. Working with a physical therapist, I balanced on boards that tilted and stepped up onto rubber domes that wiggled. I stood with my eyes closed while my physical therapist rattled the tilting board I was balancing on.

Physical therapy involves practicing increasingly difficult exercises in a controlled environment to better equip one to meet the challenges of daily life in the real world. Is it easy? No, but it isn't supposed to be. It is the presence of stressors that leads to greater strength and resiliency. It involves patience, practice, and perseverance. Without challenge, there is no growth or increased strength. In the midst of challenges, one can discover that the ability to balance does not depend on having a smooth surface beneath one's feet.

Life in the church is like balancing on uneven surfaces. That has always been true, though sometimes, we are more aware of it. Changes happen; challenges arise; difficulties occur. New people bring different perspectives. New situations cause us to rethink cherished ideas.

Sometimes if we feel the ground shifting beneath our feet, we become fearful and try to step back to a place where we feel more comfortable, more secure. Sometimes we don't like the idea of having to work so hard to keep our balance. We forget that the only way to keep our balance is like riding a bicycle: keep moving forward.

From the earliest days of the church, believers have faced challenges both big and little. It is part of the fabric of life and faith. In the Gospels, stories abound about the disciples in their struggles, betrayals, denials, and failures to understand. Their enthusiasm turned to foot-dragging as they began to grasp that following Jesus meant embracing the path of servant ministry, where one is called to deny oneself, take up one's cross, and follow—where to save one's life means losing it.

In Acts, stories abound about the members of the early church wrestling with questions of mission, ministry, vision, hospitality, inclusion, and finances. Some of Paul's letters, including 1 Corinthians, are filled with advice to congregations about specific issues they faced. Not only were they balancing on uneven surfaces, they were also moving forward into uncharted territory. Yet wrapped up within these stories is the story of the God who remains faithful.

God calls us to deepened trust, to prayerful practice of faith, and to holy conversation. We are called to be a grace-filled community of believers practicing our faith together, even as we balance on uneven surfaces. Let us welcome the challenge and receive it as a gift, because hidden within is the opportunity to stretch and grow. Let us practice balancing—always moving forward in faith and trust—discerning how God is leading us into the future. 🌿

**The Rev. Julie A. Kanarr** serves as co-pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Port Angeles, Wash.



# LEADERS

*~ Born, Called, or Caught ~*

*By Kathryn Haueisen*





Some Leaders Are Born Women.” So reads the needlepoint given me as an ordination gift. Leadership is certainly not limited to pastors and other paid staff in the church. Any one of us might be tapped for leadership at some time in our lives. It helps me to understand leadership by thinking about trees.

We all know a tree when we see one. Right? Of course we do. What kind of tree do you think of when you hear the word *tree*? A Christmas tree? A fruit tree that yields delicious apples or peaches? A hardwood tree that dazzle us with brilliant fall colors? Or perhaps an ornamental tree with beautiful flowers? So while we all know what a tree is, we have to decide what *kind* of tree we’re talking about.

We think we know the meaning of the word *leader*. Yet we probably have many ideas about what a leader should do. These differing opinions can create unintentional conflicts in organizations. Leaders within the church really have two main missions. One is to carry out the Great Commandment that we love one another as Christ has loved us (John 15:12). The other is that we carry out the Great Commission to make disciples of all

nations (Matthew 28:19). Within these two overarching leadership goals are a variety of tasks.

Just as we use different kinds of trees for different purposes, we look to leaders to perform different functions and to tackle these two main missions from different angles.

#### **How do people become leaders?**

People assume leadership roles in several ways.

**Some are born into leadership.** A few people are destined for leadership by birth. This is often the case when one is born into a royal family or a family that owns its own business. The Bible frequently refers to kings who inherited the throne of Israel. Jesus, through his adopted father, Joseph, descends from the lineage of King David (Matthew 1:6–16).

**Some are called or chosen for leadership.** God sometimes appoints

people to lead. Such was the case for Abraham and Sarah who were told to leave their home and travel to a new place (Genesis 12). They were called to be the parents of a mighty nation. Deborah, who served her people

as a judge in Israel, was called into action to do battle on behalf of her people (Judges 4 and 5). Sometimes people are called to lead others through a difficult situation.

**People may be caught in a leadership position.** When the going gets tough, some accept the challenge to do whatever it takes to resolve the situation. A combination of their passion and an obvious need propels them into a leadership role. This happened to Queen Esther who was in a position to influence King Ahasuerus when the wicked Haman plotted to exterminate her people (Esther).

**People evolve into leadership through service.** Ruth chose to stay with her widowed mother-in-law, Naomi. That decision led her to become part of the lineage leading up to the birth of Christ. Because of her decision to stay with Naomi, Ruth eventually married Boaz and



the two of them became the paternal grandparents of King David (Ruth). Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43) acquired leadership by tending to the needs of others. When the distraught disciples thought she had died they called on Peter to tend to her. The story tells us there were widows weeping. They had come to depend on Dorcas because she made tunics and other pieces of clothing for them.

### **Effective leaders grow**

Leaders and trees have in common that they both start small and keep growing. Even the tallest tree starts from a tiny seed. Leaders often rise up from within a group because they have the seed of an idea to improve a situation. As their passion grows, their leadership role expands. Many women with passion and determination have started programs to improve the lives of others.

Pastor Barb Simmers is such a woman. When Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast region she was serving at Peace Lutheran in Slidell, La. This community is located northeast of New Orleans and only a short drive from the Mississippi border. As a relatively new pastor to the congregation, she and her members were developing a vision and mission for the congregation's future.

Katrina delivered the mission for them after the extreme dev-

astation of that event. Since the 2005 hurricane, Peace Lutheran has hosted over 6,000 volunteers from across the country who have come to help with the recovery process. The church turned an education wing into a dormitory. They raised funds to put up a separate building with kitchen and restroom facilities. They brought in a portable laundromat. They set up a small RV area in their back yard. Pastor Simmers responded to the call to serve as a pastor. After the storm her leadership evolved and she became a major player in the recovery process for the region.

Effective leaders must develop skills and a vision for what could become. This may occur through education, networking, and mentoring, or taking time to read, pray, meditate, and discern. This is much like the way a new tree sends its roots deep into the rich soil. This initial time of growth is essential for future effective development.

Leaders also send out messages of change and challenge. This may take the form of "telling the story" wherever and whenever there is opportunity. The leader consistently and persistently shares a vision of a new and better way. Trees grow by sending out new twigs that become mature limbs.

For leaders to be most effective they must spend some time apart to nurture their own growth. Jesus

both spent time with his followers and time apart from them. Leaders must have times when they are visible and other times when they withdraw in order to grow and gain new perspectives.

### **Different gifts for different leaders**

Whether people come into a leadership role by birth, call, or circumstance, each leader brings along a unique personality style. Each personality style offers both benefits and challenges. No one person can possibly possess all the traits others may want in their leader.

For example an extroverted leader will thrive on a lot of contact with people. They will be energized by face-to-face meetings and high-energy events attended by many people. Such a leader may need to be encouraged to slow down once in a while to process what's happening and discern what is in the best interest of the organization. Be wary of leaders who brag they never take a day off! Lack of down time is often the start of some form of major trouble.

An introverted leader can handle the social interaction that is part of leadership, but may be drained afterwards and need time alone to recharge. Such a leader may be accused of being stand-offish or not very sociable when in reality she just needs more solitude to recharge her energy.



A leader who is strong in details may get so carried away with the facts and figures she loses track of the big picture of the vision and mission. On the other hand, one who is great at defining a vision and building up enthusiasm for the mission may never get around to completing reports or filing necessary documents.

A leader who excels at strategic thinking and planning may appear insensitive to the feelings of others in the organization. While someone who can demonstrate great empathy may get so bogged down in how everyone is feeling that the long-range plans are never carried out.

Effective leaders have several roles within a group or organization. Some of these are:

- Help the group define why they exist and what they wish to accomplish.
- Keep the group moving forward toward the agreed upon goals and objectives.
- Either know how to reach these goals or line up the people and resources to find out how to reach their goals.
- Train, equip, mentor, support, challenge, and encourage others to also lead. Healthy organizations do not rely solely on one person's personality, passion, charm, and dedication. They are constantly training new leaders.

- Know how to avoid setbacks when possible and recover from them when they do occur.

### Leaders need nurturing

Leadership can be challenging, exhausting, lonely, and at times overwhelming. Leadership can also be rewarding, fulfilling, and exciting. Organizations that cherish and support their leaders are more likely to wind up with leaders who are able to effectively carry out the group's mission.

Here are some ways to support and encourage a leader:

- Pray with and for your leader.
- Say thank you often via written and spoken words.
- When the leader does something helpful, tell others.
- When the leader does something disappointing, speak directly to the leader before talking to anyone else. Then speak to others only to try to improve the situation; not to criticize the leader in absentia.
- Volunteer to help without being asked.
- When asked to help say, "Yes," if you can. If you cannot, offer to help find another way to get the task done.
- Be clear about expectations of the leader such as length of service, number of meetings to attend, budget constraints,

channels of communication, and lines of authority in making decisions.

- Encourage the leader to take regular time away to study, learn, grow, do self-care activities, and network with other leaders.

We never know when we may be called upon to serve as a leader. God has created each of us with the capacity to lead when called upon to do so. We may be born into leadership. We may be trained into leadership. Or we may be caught in a leadership role because we're the one available when a leader is needed.

Whenever or however we attempt to lead others, we can find strength and comfort in knowing that the God who calls people into leadership also equips and sustains leaders for the task.

From the time of Abraham and Sarah to the present moment, God's will is carried out through those who respond to an opportunity to lead. God's work is truly done through our hands. Some of those hands belong to the leader. Sometimes we are one of those leaders. 🌸

**The Rev. Kathryn Haueisen** has served congregations in Texas and Ohio. Now semi-retired, she helps non-profit organizations with small budgets reach big goals. Visit her Web site at [www.kathyhaueisen.com](http://www.kathyhaueisen.com) for more information.





## CALENDAR NOTES

# November

compiled by Audrey Novak Riley from sources including the Lutheran Study Bible, Evangelical Lutheran Worship, and Sundays and Seasons, published by Augsburg Fortress, Publishers ([www.augsburgfortress.org](http://www.augsburgfortress.org)). After a five-year run, this is the last issue in which Calendar Notes will be published. You can send a note of thanks to author Audrey Riley at [audrey.riley@elca.org](mailto:audrey.riley@elca.org).

As the liturgical calendar turns toward its own ending and new beginning, so does the lectionary. This month's texts and observances lead us to ponder where we've been and where we're going, and who has gone before us to help show us the way.

### 1 All Saints Day

There are saints known to all the world and saints known to ourselves alone. What makes your saints holy to you? Do you think you might be a saint to someone else? The texts appointed for the day are Daniel 7:1–3, 15–18; Psalm 149; Ephesians 1:11–23; and Luke 6:20–31.

### 3 Martin de Porres, renewer of society

Martin, the son of a former slave and a Spanish soldier who abandoned his family, grew up in poverty in Lima, Peru. Trained as a barber (barbers were also surgeons back then), he was first admitted to the Dominican friary in Lima as a servant, but the prior soon put his skills to work in the infirmary. He was beloved throughout the city for his untiring care of the sick and suffering—he built a hospital, an orphanage, and even a clinic for cats and dogs. In art, Martin is depicted as a young man of color in a friar's black and white robe, often accompanied by a dog, cat, bird, and mouse all eating from the same dish.

### 7 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Many congregations will observe All Saints today, but you might ponder the texts appointed for Sunday for your own

devotions. Today's texts are about what happens at the end—the end of time and our own end. The first reading is the source of one of the most beautiful, comforting pieces of music I've ever heard—“I Know That My Redeemer Liveth” in Handel's *Messiah*. If your congregation will be hosting a performance of that great work this winter, make a point of listening for that aria. Sunday's readings are Job 19:23–27a; Psalm 17:1–9; or Haggai 1:15b–9; Psalm 145:1–5, 18–21 or Psalm 98; 2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–7; and Luke 20:27–38.

### 11 Veterans Day

Today began as a commemoration of the armistice that ended the Great War—the war to end war—that is, World War I, which of course was followed soon enough by World War II. A wise clergyman of my acquaintance once said, “Even a just war is a horrible thing.” And he is so right. Let us pray today that the long-ago prophecy will come true in our lifetimes, that swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks, and nation will no longer take up sword against nation, and humanity will study war no more.

### 11 Martin, bishop of Tours

This Roman soldier was riding patrol when he saw a beggar shivering at the city gates. Impulsively, he drew his sword, cut his own thick military cloak in half, and gave the warm garment to the beggar. That night he dreamed he saw Jesus wearing the cloak and saying



to his angels, "Look, there is Martin, a Roman soldier who isn't even baptized; he gave me this cloak." He was baptized as soon as he could be and went on to an illustrious career as a peacemaker and bishop. He died in the year 397.

We still hear about that cloak every time we learn about a chaplain serving with the military. A bit of Martin's cloak was one of the treasures of the Frankish kings back in the sixth century, and it went everywhere with the king, even into battle, as a holy relic to swear oaths on. The priest who carried the box that held the cloak (*cappa* in Latin) was called the *cappellanus*, and before long all priests who were attached to the military were called *cappelani*, or in French, *chapelains*. Now that word is extended to all clergy who care for the spiritual needs of men and women in military service.

An old custom is to name a baby after the saint on whose day the baby is born or baptized. Martin Luther was baptized today in 1483.

#### 24 25th Sunday after Pentecost

Some scholars take the hair-raising prophecy that Jesus gives in today's Gospel as a clue that the text was written after the year 70, when the city was under siege and the temple was indeed thrown down. The texts appointed for today are Malachi 4:1-2a; Psalm 98; or Isaiah 65:17-25; Isaiah 12:2-6 (as

a responsorial); 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; and Luke 21:5-19.

#### 17 Elizabeth of Hungary, renewer of society

There are hospitals all over the world named for this medieval princess who sold her jewels to feed the poor and care for the sick after a terrible flood devastated the countryside around her castle. You can read more about her in the November 2009 issue of *Lutheran Woman Today*, available at [www.lutheranwomantoday.org](http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org). Click on "Back Issues" to find it.

#### 21 Christ the King

##### Last Sunday after Pentecost

The prayer of the day today begins, "O God, our true life, to serve you is freedom,<sup>#</sup> and to know you is unending joy." Amen and amen. The texts appointed for this feast, the last Sunday of the liturgical year, are Jeremiah 23:1-6; Psalm 46 or Luke 1:68-79 (as a responsorial); Colossians 1:11-20; and Luke 23:33-43.

#### 25 Day of Thanksgiving (U.S.A.)

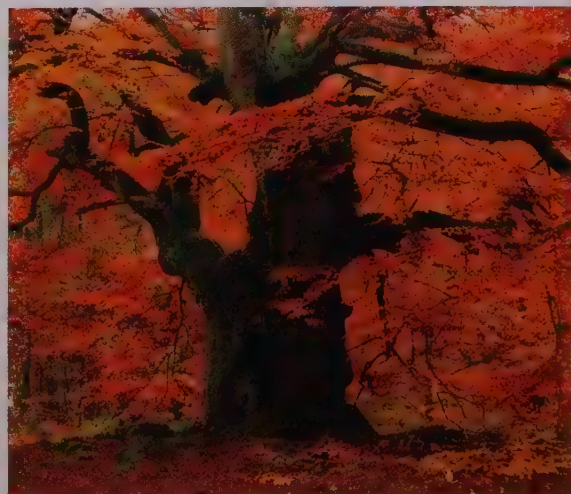
What are you thankful for today? I'm thankful for the many years I've been honored to write this column for you. The readings for today are Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 100; Philippians 4:4-9; and John 6:25-35.

#### 28 First Sunday of Advent

A new liturgical year begins today—year A, the year of Matthew. Calendar Notes has covered the three-year lectionary cycle (and then some) in this magazine, so this is a good time for this column to conclude. I hope it has been a helpful (and maybe sometimes entertaining) glimpse into the wisdom and treasures of the church—its lectionary, its history, its people. Thanks for reading. The texts appointed for the First Sunday of Advent are Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; and Matthew 24:36-44.

#### 29 Andrew, Apostle

It's fitting that Andrew is the first apostle we celebrate every liturgical year, since he was one of Jesus' first followers, and one of the first to bring someone else—his brother Peter—to Jesus. His call story is in the Gospel appointed today. The texts for Andrew's day are Ezekiel 3:16-21; Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 10:10-18; and John 1:35-42.





# CORINTH

## IN THE TIME OF PAUL

by Joy A. Schroeder



The apostle Paul lived in Corinth for 18 months, working as a tent-maker and proclaiming the gospel (Acts 18:1–11). What was Corinth like at the time of Paul? Who were the Corinthian Christians? What joys and struggles did they face?

### MASTER OF TWO HARBORS

Though located in Greece, Corinth was a thoroughly Roman city in the first century A.D. In 146 B.C., the Roman army destroyed Corinth for rebelling against Roman rule. Most inhabitants were killed or taken away into slavery. A century later, Emperor Julius Caesar found-

ed a Roman colony on the site of Corinth's ruins. City streets were laid out in the logical grid pattern preferred by Romans. People normally used Latin for official business, but Greek was also spoken. Many early settlers were freedmen and freedwomen from Italy. These former slaves, people of low social status, sought opportunities in the newly built city. Corinth grew rapidly. When Paul lived there around 50–51 A.D., there may have been 85,000 residents.

Corinth rested on a plain beneath the Acrocorinth, a rugged gray mountain rising up 1886

feet. The city, a bustling center of shipping and trade, was situated on the isthmus (a narrow strip of land that connects two larger land areas) that joined the Peloponnesian peninsula with the rest of mainland Greece. An ancient geographer called Corinth "the master of two harbors." On the west side of the isthmus, ships journeying from Italy via the Aegean Sea anchored at the port of Lechaëum. Cenchreæ, the eastern port, received ships from Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

At its narrowest, the isthmus was four miles wide. Many sailors traveling between Asia Minor and



Corinth was a cosmopolitan city with all the amenities that an ancient citizen could desire. One could attend the theater or exercise in the gymnasium. Natural springs provided fresh water. Men and

god of earthquakes. In a region frequently shaken by earthquakes, worshippers wanted to keep Poseidon appeased.

#### THE RUNNERS COMPETE

women of all social ranks soaked in the heated public baths. State-of-the-art public latrines were lined with benches. (One did not expect privacy.) In channels beneath the latrines, water washed away the waste.

At the *agora* (marketplace), shoppers bought food, clothing, pottery, and other goods. The city was famous for Corinthian

Once every two years, Corinth hosted the Isthmian Games, an international athletic competition held in spring, a comfortable time of year for travelers and competitors. The city swelled with sports enthusiasts from all over the empire. Jugglers and street musicians entertained the crowds. Vendors sold food and drink. Lawyers advertised their services by delivering speeches to passers-by. Many visitors camped in tents. Since Paul was probably in Corinth when the games were held there in 51 A.D., tourists may have kept him busy with tent repairs.

bronze, a pale bronze-tin alloy used for dinnerware and figurines. Some market stalls were located in porticos (covered walkways) lining the agora's perimeter. Other vendors used awnings to shelter their wares from sun and rain.

There was an array of beautiful temples dedicated to Greek, Roman, and Egyptian deities, including the sea-god Poseidon, who was honored with a bronze statue and beautiful fountain. Water spouted from the mouth of a decorative dolphin at Poseidon's feet. Sailors visited Poseidon's temple, praying for protection at sea. He was also the

Spectators enjoyed races, wrestling matches, and equestrian stunt contests. Daring riders performed gymnastic tricks on horseback or leaped from one moving chariot to another. In women's competitions, female athletes ran in footraces and raced war chariots. Victors were crowned with wreaths woven from wild celery leaves. Perhaps Paul had the wilted celery crowns in mind when he compared Christian life to a footrace: "Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all



Italy wanted to avoid the time-consuming, perilous trip around the peninsula, with its risks of dangerous winds, pirates, and shipwreck. So most ships landed at one port, where dockworkers off-loaded their cargo. Ox carts then transported the merchandise along a limestone road to the other port to be picked up by another ship and carried to its destination. Small ships could even be hoisted out of the harbor and pulled across the isthmus on ox-drawn rollers. Merchants and ship-owners paid fees for these services, but it was worth it to avoid the treacherous trip around the peninsula.



things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one" (1 Corinthians 9:24–25).

### DAILY LIFE

Men dressed in tunics, and women wore ankle-length draped dresses. Most inhabitants of Corinth were poor citizens or slaves who dwelt in tiny rented apartments. Shop owners slept in back rooms or humble lofts above their stores. Affluent families lived in the suburbs in gracious Roman-style villas decorated with colorful mosaic floors.

A poor person's meal typically consisted of bread and vegetables. Most residents consumed little meat, which was expensive. Despite Corinth's proximity to the sea, fresh fish was costly because there was not enough to supply the entire population. Salted, pickled, and dried fish was cheaper and more readily available. Meals could also include olives, grapes, honey, cheese, apricots, and currants made from dried black grapes. (The English word *currant* is derived from the name *Corinth*.) Despite limited rainfall and occasional food shortages, hard-working farmers of the region usually produced a rich supply of food for those who could afford it.

### THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Many Bible scholars estimate there were approximately 50 Christians in Corinth at that time. Most were

probably slaves, freed people, and members of the lower social classes (1 Corinthians 1:26 and 7:21). Several church members probably had some wealth: Erastus, the city treasurer; Gaius, who was host to the whole church in Corinth (Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14); Crispus, a former synagogue administrator (Acts 18:8); and Chloe, who sent messengers to Paul (1 Corinthians 1:11). Phoebe, deacon at the church in nearby Cenchreae, was Paul's patron (Romans 16:1–2).

Christians regularly gathered for an evening meal and the Lord's Supper. Their worship included hymns, lessons, prayers, and messages inspired by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:26). Since there were no church buildings, the community probably worshipped in wealthier members' homes. Apartments rented by the majority of Corinthians were too small for the entire church to assemble. Elite homes, such as the one where Gaius may have lived, were more spacious, but the floor plan would have made worshipping awkward.

Upper-class houses had dining rooms designed to accommodate small dinner parties, where up to nine people could recline on couches. About 40 could gather in the perimeter of the atrium, a covered courtyard with a rectangular pool in the center. Above the pool, an opening in the roof let in rainwater.

Flickering oil lamps provided light for the gatherings. On winter evenings, when temperatures dropped into the low 40s, charcoal braziers offered some heat, but the atrium would have remained chilly. If some worshippers reclined in the dining room and others sat in the atrium, this could have reinforced society's divisions between rich and poor.

Paul criticized how they conducted their community meals: "When the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk." Thus they "humiliate those who have nothing" (1 Corinthians 11:21–22). At dinner parties in the ancient world, the poorest guests received meager portions of inferior-quality food and drink, while the host and upper-class friends feasted sumptuously. Roman satirical writers complained about miserly hosts and their elite guests gorging on delicacies, while less prestigious guests were served pitiful rations of barely edible food.

Perhaps Corinthian Christians followed this custom at their worship gatherings. Wealthy members sponsoring the meal may have felt entitled to special treatment. Slaves and poor people, who worked long hours, could not arrive until later in the evening, while the wealthy had the leisure time to show up earlier. The food—or at least the best por-



ions—would have been consumed by then. Paul orders them not to begin their meal until everyone arrived (1 Corinthians 11:33).

Paul also thought their worship style was disorderly. While generally approving of speaking in tongues, miraculous utterances in unknown languages, Paul thought the community practiced this in a chaotic way. He said that people inspired to speak in tongues should take turns and ensure that someone offered an interpretation so everyone could be instructed (1 Corinthians 14:1–33).

## CHALLENGES

### AND TEMPTATIONS

Paul's letters provide evidence that many Corinthian Christians remained well-connected with life in the wider society. They made use of law courts, sometimes even pressing civil charges against fellow Christians. Lawsuits were common in Greek and Roman cities. People constantly sued one another over contract disputes and allegations of slander. One ancient writer called Corinthian lawyers "vultures in togas" and said judges accepted bribes. Paul criticized Corinthian Christians for lodging lawsuits against one another. He said they should settle their disputes among themselves (1 Corinthians 6:1–7).

Corinth had a reputation for immorality, although it probably had no more prostitutes than other

major port cities. Ancient writers reported that Corinth's temple of the love-goddess Aphrodite had 1,000 prostitutes for religious fundraising purposes. Historians now think that was just a legend, but people in the ancient world believed the story. Plato even used the phrase *Corinthian girl* as slang for *prostitute*. Most prostitutes were forced into this terrible life by their owners, who made money selling their slaves' bodies. Pimps purchased both boys and girls for this purpose. Paul commanded his readers never to have sexual relations with prostitutes. Apparently he believed some church members were sinning in this way (1 Corinthians 6:15–19).

Another challenge was meat offered to idols. Meat became less expensive at religious festival times when worshippers offered animals at the temple. Typically the temple god received the animal's entrails and thigh portion. Surplus meat was sold at the marketplace to generate income for the temple. When Christians in Corinth attended their pagan friends' dinner parties, the meat being served may have once been an offering to a Greek or Roman god.

Frequently dinner parties were held in banqueting rooms at the temple. Some Christians saw no reason to worry about meat sacrificed to idols, since such gods did not really exist. A few may even have

thought it was acceptable to feast at a temple banquet room (1 Corinthians 8:10). Other Christians, however, were offended. Paul advised Christians shopping in the marketplace or dining with non-Christian friends not to worry themselves by asking where the meat came from. However, if someone *told* them the meat had been a sacrifice, they should abstain, to avoid troubling the consciences of fellow believers (1 Corinthians 10:25–29).

## BODY LANGUAGE

In 1 Corinthians, Paul talks a lot about food and sex—matters related to the body. Corinth was a city where wealthy people could dine lavishly, while the poor suffered hunger. Slaves were the physical property of their masters. The bodies of prostitutes were sexually exploited. Corinthian society created divisions between rich and poor, slave and free, but Paul said that these divisions have no place in the church. The apostle used the metaphor of the human body to teach Corinthian Christians about their interdependent relationship with one another (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). Paul insisted that Christians should treat one another with honor and respect, as members of *one* body—the body of Christ. 🌿

**The Rev. Dr. Joy A. Schroeder**, an ELCA pastor, teaches church history at Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary.





HEALTH WISE

## Sensation of Smell

by Molly M. Ginty

### Dogs do it 1,000 times

better than humans.

Water shrews do it while submerged.

Moths do it from 300 feet away.

And you've been doing it since before you were born.

Smell. The most enigmatic of our five senses—the one that most reveals our animal nature and the one that scientists understand the least—is also one that's key to our health.

"Smell developed to protect us from harm," says Charles Wysocki, Ph.D., a behavioral neuroscientist at the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia. "And just as we once used it to sniff out predators, we still need it to protect ourselves from rancid food and dangerous situations."

How does this safety system work? Whether it's the aroma of freshly brewed coffee—or of overripe oranges—each smell you encounter is comprised of small molecules called "chemical odorants" that waft in through your nose, hit a postage-stamp-sized area at the top of your nasal cavity, and there encounter your 5 million olfactory receptor cells. These nerve cells send smell information to two parts of your brain: the limbic system, which processes feelings and memory, and the olfactory cortex, where smells are interpreted.

Since scents are processed in the same part of the brain that interprets emotion and past events, smell can send you back to your history—and go straight into your heart. The scent of chalk may remind you of how excited you were on

your first day of kindergarten, while the aroma of freshly baked brownies may make you remember how loved you felt in your grandmother's kitchen.

Although the average human being recognizes 10,000 different smells, women are especially sensitive to odors and the emotions they evoke. Women smell most acutely during the phase of the menstrual cycle when they are most fertile. And studies show they are more likely to find the scent of a man "pleasant" if his immune system complements theirs and if their union would give rise to a child with a robust, healthy immune system.

After a woman gets pregnant, her sense of smell is keenest during the first trimester, when a developing fetus is highly vulnerable to toxins. Mothers' noses prevent them from ingesting foods that could potentially harm their babies. And what we all eat—all of the time—hinges on what we smell. Up to 90 percent of what we perceive as flavor doesn't come from the tongue, but from our olfactory receptors. That's why food becomes bland if we pinch our noses—or if our noses are plugged up by colds.

Because smell is more complicated than other bodily processes, only recently did scientists figure out how our olfactory receptors work—an accomplishment that won the 2004 Nobel Prize for researchers at Columbia University in New York City.

As they continue to unravel the mysteries of smell, scientists have made some fascinating discoveries. People act more fairly and generously when sniff

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This ongoing column is part of the Women of the ELCA health initiative, Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls. Visit [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) for more information.



ing scents they perceive to be “clean,” found a University of Toronto study. Sprinkling scent-enhancing granules on our meals can make them taste better and satiate you sooner, claim the makers of Sensa, a diet product. Dogs have such finely tuned noses that they can smell cancer before medical tests detect it, say researchers at the Pine Street Foundation in San Anselmo, California.

How might smell affect humanity’s future? It may be possible to build an artificial nose that is just as accurate as that of a dog, believe professors at Boston’s Massachusetts Institute of Technology. And we may some day be able to identify individuals based on their unique “smell signature,” theorize researchers at the U.S. Department of Defense.

Our “odortype,” it turns out, can be even more distinguishing than our facial features. Studies show people can literally sniff out each other’s genetic makeup. With just a few whiffs, we are able to differentiate strangers from people we know, vegetarians from people who eat meat, and people who are stressed from those who are calm. Each and every day, we absorb this information—and make decisions based upon it—without ever realizing what is happening.

Ever notice that bakeries blow air—and aromas—from their kitchens toward their storefronts? Ever stand in a children’s store and sniff an artificial bubble-gum scent? Vendors know that smell affects the subconscious, and they use it to sell everything from croissants to kids’ clothes.

Powerful as the sense of smell may be, it can go awry. Head injuries and severe upper respiratory infections can damage the olfactory nerve and can thus make you lose your sense of scent. They can also trigger parosmia (distorted smell) or phantosmia (olfactory hallucinations). “To safeguard your ability to smell, wear a seatbelt every time you’re in the car, wear protective gear during contact sports, treat sinus infections immediately, and avoid formaldehyde, petroleum products, and other irritants that can damage your olfactory system,” recommends Craig Warren, Ph.D., the scientific affairs director of the Sense of Smell Institute in New York City.

Of all the senses, smell is the one most affected by aging. People over age 50 are less likely to be able to detect stove gas, and their compromised sense of smell can affect their food preferences, nutritional status—and safety. “The good news is that your smell is a skill you can avoid losing if you use it—and challenge it—regularly,” says Wysocki. “You can help protect it if you enjoy wine tastings, fine cheeses, tending flower gardens, and cooking with aromatic spices.”

Infants can detect scents while they are still in the womb, and if you do your best to take care of your sense of smell, you’ll continue to enjoy the tang of fresh citrus, the sweet scent of jasmine, and the earthy aroma of fallen leaves well into your own autumn years. 🌿

**Molly M. Ginty** lives in New York. Her work has appeared in *Women’s eNews*, *Marie Claire*, *Redbook*, and *Ms*.



For more information:

Monell Chemical Senses Center  
[www.monell.org](http://www.monell.org)

Sense of Smell Institute  
[www.senseofsmell.org](http://www.senseofsmell.org)



# Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice By Roger A. Willer

## ■ OUTLINE

## ■ PROLOGUE

## ■ THE CHURCH'S VISION OF CREATION

God, Earth, and All Creatures

Our Place in Creation

## ■ THE URGENCY

Sin and Captivity

The Current Crisis

## ■ THE HOPE

The Gift of Hope

Hope in Action

## ■ THE CALL TO JUSTICE

Justice through Participation

Justice through Solidarity

Justice through Sufficiency

Justice through Sustainability

## ■ COMMITMENTS OF THIS CHURCH

As Individual Christians

As a Worshiping and Learning Community

As a Committed Community

As a Community of Moral Deliberation

As an Advocate

## ■ CLAIMING THE PROMISE (Conclusion)

This ELCA social statement and accompanying study guide are available for free download at [www.elca.org/socialstatements](http://www.elca.org/socialstatements). You can order a free printed copy online at that address or by calling 800-638-3522, ext. 2996.

Why should you and I care about the earth? Most people would probably answer: "Well, because human society will suffer if we do not," or, "Because we owe it to our children and grandchildren to leave them a healthy planet."

These are good and important reasons! However, the ELCA social statement on the environment, *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice*, gives a different, bigger, and perhaps surprising answer. It tells us that we should care about the rest of creation because that is our job—this is why God creates us. It also insists that the Bible tells us that caring for creation is a matter of justice and a deeply spiritual matter. (p. 8)\*

The social statement is like that—clear, pithy, and constructively challenging. This article reviews some of its key points but the most important message is: Take the time to read it for yourself, bearing in mind recent situations reported in the news. This statement is shorter than most, easy to read, and contains lots to make a Christian reflect in fresh ways about the environment and our special responsibility to it. While the statement was adopted by the churchwide assembly in 1991, it remains timely and relevant today.

The first section, The Church's Vision of Creation, makes the Nicene Creed's point that God is fully involved in creating. It reminds us that Jesus Christ is the one "through whom all things were made" and that Christians confess that "the Holy Spirit is the Lord, the giver of life." God is still creating today and the whole creation was and is good, even without humankind on the scene (p. 2).

\*Page numbers in the social statement are given throughout this article in parenthesis.



Human beings are made to care for the earth as God cares for the earth. This is what it means to be made in the image of God (p. 2). When Genesis speaks about human dominion (Genesis 1:26), it does not mean we have a special privilege to exploit the earth for ourselves, but a special responsibility to serve and keep the earth for the good of all. Human beings are made to imitate the way God keeps and cares for us, as a servant king (Philippians 2:7). Moreover, we are to order human activity according to God's wisdom in creation, something that science and technology can help us discover (p. 3).

The next section, The Urgency, describes the fundamental problem of the environmental crisis: "Our sin and captivity lie at the roots of the current crisis" (p. 3). In our captivity to sin, we human beings exploit the earth as if it is a boundless warehouse. Two problems in particular jeopardize efforts to achieve a sustainable future for all of nature:

- Excessive consumption; and
- Relentless growth of the human population; this is a problem that springs from and is intensified by social injustice in the form of poor education, lack of

employment, poor health care, and equal rights (p. 4).

The environmental problem is worsened because each kind of environmental degradation feeds on others, magnifying them into a crisis threatening the whole earth. The section concludes by warning that the time for changing course "is very short" (p. 5), as recent scientific reports on climate change remind us.

Many people may find such dire predictions and problems overwhelming. But Christians live in hope. Even when the prospects for improvement look bleak, we proclaim that God addresses our predicaments with the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and that God empowers us to be loving servants who act. We are not captives of sin, but become "captives of hope" (Zechariah 9:11-12). How we should act is guided by justice.

By justice? Yes, the section entitled The Hope and the Call to Justice identifies four principles of justice that we are called to live out in the face of the intricate complexities of the created order and the social order (pp. 6, 7):

- *Participation*—God's covenant with all living things (Genesis

9:12-17, Hosea 2:18) means that animals and the land are entitled to have their just interests considered when decisions are made regarding resources. Human beings should be advocates for the non-human parts of creation.

- *Solidarity*—the fact that God is the creator of all leads us to acknowledge our interdependence with all other creatures. We are to act both locally and globally on behalf of all creation, especially for those members that are at greatest risk.
- *Sufficiency*—God's Spirit is actively creating every moment and so we know there is enough to meet the needs of all creatures. Because the world is finite, though, this has implications for human population growth, acquisition and consumption.
- *Sustainability*—God intends for creation to last a long time, until the day of Jesus Christ. In the meantime humankind must strive toward an acceptable quality of life for present generations without compromising that of future generations.

Guided by these four principles, the last section rededicates the ELCA to



live into the challenge to change personal habits and social structures.

- It calls for commitment to personal lifestyles that help heal the environment.
- It encourages creation emphases in the church year and the development of liturgical, preaching, and education materials that celebrate God's creation.
- It calls for congregations to have an environmental audit and to incorporate principles of sufficiency and sustainability in their building, budgeting, and investment (p. 10).
- On practical questions such as nuclear and toxic waste, farming practices, or population growth, it invites the interaction of differing convictions and experiences (p. 10).
- It calls upon our church to play a role in bringing together par-

ties in the conflicts over these issues, both within the church and outside.

In public debates:

- It invites all of us to shape our advocacy with government, private entities, and international organizations (advocacy is speaking out for the earth and for others) according to the principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability.
- It commits our church to dialogue with corporations on promoting justice for creation and to seek public policies that allow people to participate fully in decisions affecting their own health and livelihood.

*Caring for Creation* relies upon a biblical vision of wholeness for cre-

ation. It depends upon a Christian understanding of the human role to serve in creation, and a hope rooted in God's faithfulness. It leaves no question: God is at work seeking wholeness and justice for the creation, and God calls us to be hands in this work.

The statement speaks to each of us since individually and collectively we *all* can contribute to this work. Each of us was made to be a caretaker of creation.

As people of the ELCA we have answered the call to care for creation in certain respects, but we should not be surprised that this powerful statement calls the whole church to rededicate itself today as "captives of hope, and vehicles of God's promise" (p. 12). 🌿

The Rev. Dr. Roger A. Willer is director for the department for studies in ELCA Church in Society.



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This is the Sunday school classroom

That welcomes the children

That belong to the church

That installed the green energy system

That started with your investment.

WHEN FAITH AND FINANCES MEET, AMAZING THINGS HAPPEN.

Sometimes caring for God's creation means rethinking how you heat your church. That's what Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, did when it installed an environmentally friendly, cost efficient heating and cooling system with a loan from the Mission Investment Fund. When you or your congregation invests with the MIF, financial returns are only the beginning of what you'll receive. A greener, more sustainable earth? That may just be the return of a lifetime. To learn more, contact us at 877.886.3522 or [elca.org/mif](http://elca.org/mif).



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God's work. Our hands.



# Thanks be to God!

by Sue Edison-Swift

I love stories. Stories instruct and inspire. They illuminate the sacred in daily life. Shared stories connect generation to generation, creating community, family.

I especially love missionary stories. Through my work I am privy to the stories of ELCA international missionaries and their sponsors. As believers “marked with the cross of Christ forever,” we all are invited to share these cross-culture stories, listening as Jesus gives us the ears to hear the grace-filled-good-news in the stories. These shared stories offer a bridge from “us and them” to “companions and neighbors.” Thanks be to God!

Here are a just a few of my favorite stories drawn from the newsletters, e-mails, and blog posts ELCA missionaries send to their sponsors. Find more missionary stories on the Hand in Hand Blog Digest at <http://blogs.elca.org/handinhand>.

## THE HARVEST OFFERING

The Rev. Deborah Troester  
(Baboua, Central African Republic)

“*Osoko, Jesu, Osoko!* Thank you, Jesus, thank you!” sings the choir of young

people as they march into the sanctuary, swaying to the beat of their thanksgiving song.

In Baboua, Central African Republic, it is the time of the Don de Récolte—the Harvest Offering. Like our Thanksgiving celebrations, it is a harvest festival, when congregations bring in the best of their harvest, along with a special offering, to thank God for the blessings of the past year, especially for good crops and food on their tables.

Women wearing colorful floor-length African dresses come bearing dishes full of *manioc* or a large bunch of bananas to place before the altar. Men dressed in long robes, or in their best T-shirts and jeans, bring their envelopes containing a special monetary gift for the Thanksgiving

offering. Little children, led by their Sunday school teachers, file down the aisle, clutching their few francs to deposit in the plastic offering basket.

At the Tongo Lutheran Church in Baboua, the entire congregation waits as the money is being counted. As a choir sings to the accompaniment of drums and rhythm instruments, deaconesses serve us coffee and bananas.

At last the good news is announced: the total offering comes to over \$300. “What an offering!” exclaims the president of the congregation. Everyone cheers. This will ensure that the work of the



left, the Troester family; above, Tom Ososki and Dana Nelson; right, the Oyeboade family; far right, Cindy and Sam Wolff



church can continue for another year. Of course, offerings are taken every Sunday, but the Thanksgiving offering helps carry the church through the dry season (November through May) when times are lean and food is not as plentiful.

## ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

**The Rev. Dana Nelson (Lima, Peru)**

“What’s a *pollada*?” I asked, understanding that it had something to do with chicken (the Spanish word for chicken is *pollo*). I was told it’s “a chickening” or “a chicken shower.” I’ve come to understand *pollada* (pronounced poyáda) to be a chicken-dinner-fundraiser.

Last month my kids and I attended a *pollada* at Roberto’s house to raise money for his healthcare. Roberto, a dear member of our congregation, and his family seasoned and fried up about 20 *pollo*s for the dinner. The evening

of dinner, dancing, and socializing raised enough money to buy a three-month supply of needed medicine.

As I looked around the dance floor (his mother’s living room) I saw many members of the congregation. We were happy to be together and to be able to help. Perhaps I should translate *pollada* as “the mutual up-building of the saints.”

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

## KEEP ON KEEPING ON

**Mary Beth Oyeade (Jos, Nigeria)**

The dynamics of daily life have changed in the last month, the result of dealing with riots and various security threats.

It always takes me awhile to get back to normal—or I should say “the new normal.” After the riots in 2008, I was driving downtown a

few weeks later and almost stopped the car in the middle of the road when I caught sight of construction workers on a three-story building. I was so shocked that construction was continuing while I was wondering when the next wave of violence would occur. They were building for the future, and I was just trying to get through the day.

I bought a whole bunch of tomatoes, peppers, and onions last weekend just because this is the season to buy those things. I planned to can pizza sauce, spaghetti sauce, and red stew (typical Nigerian fare). But as I looked at the 200-plus empty jars on my shelves, I felt the same way I did when I saw those construction workers: filling those jars meant planning for the future—and my mind has been stuck in a daily survival mode for the past month.

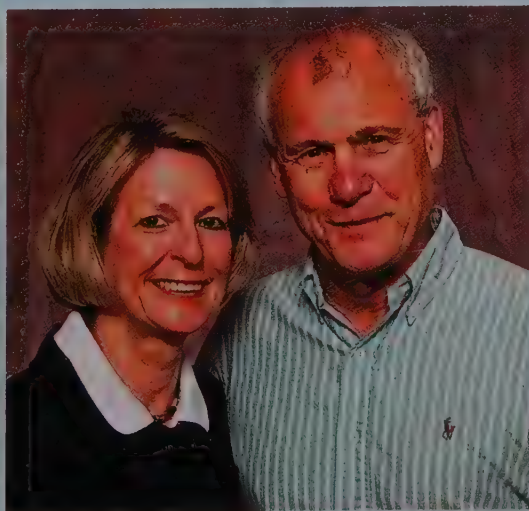
We did get the canning done with lots of extra help in the kitchen. Here’s the tally:

30 pints of pizza sauce (this will last more than one year based on current pizza eating patterns in our home); 26 pints of Grandma’s spaghetti sauce; 18 quarts of Nigerian red stew.

## DAGORETTI

**The Rev. Sam Wolff  
(Nairobi, Kenya)**

Many of our members come from the vast slums





of Dagoretti, an area just behind our church grounds. Each week Cindy and I, together with other members of our HIV/AIDS support group, go into Dagoretti on home visits.

It seems to me that the slum is not dissimilar to the mud houses with corrugated iron roofs that can be found in villages all over rural Kenya. In the slum, though, there is no view, no trees, no grass, and no space . . . just thousands of people. There is rubbish dumped randomly and open sewage. Goats, sheep, cows, chickens, and dogs mingle freely. One is advised to be careful where one steps.

Children of God live here, fall in love here, set up households, and raise fine children. It is a place

where one can celebrate the human spirit as people prevail over a most difficult set of circumstances.

Dagoretti is not a place to be pitied. It is as much of a community as Elm Street, Any City, USA. There are busy, thriving enterprises: a maize grinding shop, a place to rent DVDs, boiling pots of meat, small eateries, an old woman selling bananas, a young girl braiding hair, a traditional healer, a traditional beer purveyor, teenagers with blaring boom boxes, children playing soccer. Roadside vendors are all over the place, selling what we would consider rubbish. As in any economically depressed place, crime is sky high, and yet, people try and take care of each other. We do not have any photos to share

with you; pictures without knowing the people only elicit a “poor Africa response.” And Dagoretti is not “poor Africa,” for here live the people we are privileged to serve. Here are good people, brothers and sisters with a strong commitment to their God and a faith that often puts mine to shame.

## THE GIFT

**The Rev. Charles Frederickson**  
(Nagoya, Japan)

On Christmas morning, as we were near the end of opening presents, the buzz over the intercom signaled that we had a visitor.

I answered “*Hi, moshi, moshi*” in Japanese. An answer came back in English over the intercom, “Hello! This is Ichiro. I would like a bicycle.”

Ichiro is a young medical doctor from Mongolia who received a scholarship from the Japanese government to work on a doctoral program at a medical university here in Nagoya, Japan. Ichiro lives near the church and saw our sign saying we have worship in English. His first visit to our congregation was the fourth time he had ever attended a Christian worship service.

During Ichiro’s second visit to the congregation—on Christmas Eve—I casually mentioned that we had a “left behind” bicycle that he could use. Ichiro and I retrieved the bicycle out from under a tarp in the



## THE POWER OF A SPOON

**The Rev. Twila Schock, Director, Global Mission Support**

At age four, I sat on the floor of a North Dakota living room, clinging to each word as the Hilles, missionaries to Cameroon, spoke of how little boys and girls very far away loved and served Jesus. This spoon, their gift to my family, became a symbol of both their faithful service and our support of missionary service.

That missionary relationship planted the seeds for my missionary service 25 years later. Indeed, a covenant sponsorship is a promise to be in relationship: to communicate with each other, pray for each other, to give generously and receive graciously.

I invite you—individually, as a women’s group, as a congregation—to covenant to support an ELCA missionary. To learn more visit [www.elca.org/missionarysponsorship](http://www.elca.org/missionarysponsorship) or call 800-638-3522, ext. 2969.





Ichiro gets a bicycle.

parking lot, where it had been for over a year. It was in a sad state. I went back into the church to get a tire pump, some WD 40, and a wrench.

After the bicycle was more or less serviceable I handed it over. I told Ichiro that I did not want it back; it was a gift. At that, he smiled broadly and his smile grew after he got on the bicycle and tested it out.

Before riding off, he stopped and thanked me saying, "Thank you for my first Christmas present!" 🌸  
**Joe Edison-Swift**, associate director for ELCA Global Mission Support, collects ELCA missionary stories for the *Hand in Hand* Log Digest and the *Hand in Hand* newsletter ([www.elca.org/handinhand](http://www.elca.org/handinhand)).

## OPERATION THANKS-GIVING

In 2009, ELCA Global Mission Support launched Operation Thanks-Giving (OT-G), which included sending handmade Thanksgiving cards to ELCA missionaries. The first annual Operation Thanks-Giving blessed those who made the cards, those of us who mailed them off as random acts of appreciation, and those who received them.

Learn how to participate in Operation Thanks-Giving 2 by visiting [www.elca.org/operationthanksgiving](http://www.elca.org/operationthanksgiving).

### HAND IN HAND

Members of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran in Vale, N.C., made Operation Thanks-Giving cards prior to worship. In a note included with the 90 cards they made, the Rev. John Locke wrote *"From the preschoolers to the senior seniors, everyone created and sent a greeting, expressing love and thanks to missionaries. We have been blessed to be part of this ministry, being able to convey our love, support and thanks to those who carry God's message of love and redemption to all corners."*

### THANKS FOR THE THANKS

We heard from some missionaries who wanted to tell us how much these cards meant to them, far away from home:

**Michael Church (Romania)** > Thanks for the Operation Thanks-Giving cards, which arrived today. Terri and I were surprised and touched. This was our first big holiday away from our families, so it was a little extra-tender. We want the people who made the cards to know that we are grateful.



**Emily Ewing (Slovakia)** > My birthday was the Saturday after Thanksgiving. I was in Budapest (I'm currently a young adult in global mission in Slovakia) with other people from my program celebrating Thanksgiving. When I got back on Sunday night, I had mail waiting for me. When I opened it, it was a wonderful surprise to see the Operation Thanks-Giving cards. I know they weren't for my birthday, but it brightened up my night as I read them and looked at them. I felt loved and I felt like maybe this whole big Lutheran church really is smaller and more connected than I think. It was wonderful timing, so thank you more than you can imagine for the cards!!





# Stewardship

by Linda Johnson Seyenkulo and Jensen Seyenkulo

## WORSHIP RESOURCES

**ELW** Evangelical Lutheran Worship (*also known as the red book*)

**LBW** Lutheran Book of Worship (*also known as the green book*)

**WOV** With One Voice (*also known as the blue book*)

**TFF** This Far By Faith (*also known as the African American hymnal*)

**LLC** Libro de Liturgia y Cántico (*also known as the Latino hymnal*)

**W&P** Worship and Praise (*also known as the contemporary hymnal*)

**Can two walk together, except they be agreed?**

Amos 3:3 (KJV)

## THEME VERSE

*"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy."* 1 Corinthians 4:2

## MAIN TEXT

1 Corinthians 4:1–5

## OPENING

See Devotional Reading below.

## OVERVIEW

For most ELCA congregations stewardship seems to have its own season. Stewardship talk is only appropriate in that season. But even at that, the subject is uncomfortable for many. Do Lutherans shy away from this subject because stewardship gives the impression of "works righteousness" (the idea that we are made right with God by our own good works) or do we avoid it because we think of it as a private matter? Why do we feel uncomfortable with this subject? Maybe we need to look at what Paul has to say in 1 Corinthians. In this session, we think together of ways to comfortably talk stewardship in all seasons.

## Guidelines and Discussion Method for our Time Together

Our topic for this session is The People of God: Stewardship. To facilitate the discussion, we are going to adapt the rules for engagement and the invitation method of discussion, both of which are printed in the September 2010 issue and are available for download online at [www.lutheranwomantoday.org/biblestudy](http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org/biblestudy). If possible, keep a copy of them with your study materials so they are always handy during your time together.

At the start of each session, we ask that you refresh your memory of these two vital elements. Adhering to them—especially when more sensitive topic areas come into play—helps assure that productive discussions can respectfully take place leading to growth and greater appreciation for all who are members of the body of Christ.

## DEVOTIONAL READING

Read 1 Corinthians 4:1–5. Have someone in the group read the text aloud while the others present listen. Ask participants to listen for power words and phrases—words without which, in their opinion, the text would make little or no sense. Words and phrases like servants, servants of God, mysteries, and trustworthy are very important to the text.



1. What other words and phrases do you pick up? How do they apply to you?
2. If you are a servant, whose servant are you and what makes you a servant?

### SONG *(Select one)*

"We Give Thee but Thine Own" *ELW* 686

"Thank You Lord" *TFF* 293

### PRAYER

O God, our creator and our provider, what a position of trust you have carved out for us! You have entrusted to us the care for your beautiful earth. We remember the words of the psalmist and we acclaim with him, "Who are we that you are so mindful of us?" We must be something to you! And for this we are grateful! As we embark on this important topic, direct our thoughts and minds so that we may see stewardship for what it is: a position of trust. Give each of us an open mind to learn from your Holy Spirit and from one another. Make us better stewards of all you have entrusted to us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. (See "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice," p. 18.)

3. What comes to mind when you hear the word stewardship? (Draw a symbol if something visual comes to mind.) How often is it talked about in your congregation? In many churches the topic is seldom discussed. Without pointing fingers, why do you think that is?

### HISTORICAL READING

The Corinthian church is one of the largely Gentile churches that Paul founded in the northeastern Mediterranean region. Acts 18 gives us an idea of how the church in Corinth was founded. According to Acts chapters 17 and 18, after Paul established churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, he briefly visited

Athens and then traveled to Corinth. There he met some Jews who were open to his message. Among them were Aquila and Priscilla, a refugee couple who had fled Rome due to persecution. Like the couple, Paul was a tentmaker. He stayed with this couple and remained in Corinth for about 18 months.

During his successful year and a half in Corinth, a community of believers has developed. Priscilla and Aquila are a part of this community. But when Paul leaves for Ephesus, the couple accompanies him, leaving the door open for an unfortunate situation. Evidently the community is not yet strongly grounded in faith. And those traveling with Paul are the very people who probably could have covered for him and provided some nurturing for the fledgling group of new believers. There is a serious leadership vacuum. (See "Leaders: Born, Called, Caught," p. 6.)

With the teachings cut short and with limited resources, the community begins to show signs of cracks and weakness in the faith that once looked unshakable. The most serious evidence of these cracks is the obvious division in the community. The divided church is headed nowhere. All the energy and resources of a divided church are invested in creating more chaos or trying to prove something. Left unchecked, the Corinthian church would be headed nowhere.

The Corinthian church was divided in more ways than one. The manifestation of these divisions ranged from murmuring to gossip to attacks. News of the split and infightings reaches Paul through Chloe's household and by letters of inquiries.

One area of deepest division is the question of who among the leaders is superior. Members of the church identify with one or the other leader based on what impressed them most about the abilities or gifts of that leader. Some identify with Paul, some with Apollos, and others with Cephas. They even throw Jesus in the mix for good measure.



4. What else do we know about the Corinthian church and the city? How is the Christian church today like or unlike the Corinthian church? Who were these leaders? When we learn a little more about these men we begin to understand how the Corinthian community was led astray and how we are not all that different from them. (See "Corinth in the Time of Paul," p. 12.)

### Players in the action in Corinth

**Apollos:** Luke describes Apollos as an eloquent and learned Jew born in Alexandria with a comprehensive knowledge of the Old Testament. Apollos is said to have gifts that church people like to identify with. He is bold, eloquent, learned, and he knows scriptures. Unfortunately, those who admired his gifts were the ones who misdirected their devotions.

**Cephas:** Cephas is the Aramaic form of Peter, meaning rock. At one time a disciple of John the Baptizer, Peter became one of the greatest disciples to follow Jesus. He was not only a follower; he was fiercely devoted to Christ.

**Paul:** Paul is said to be second only to Jesus in his contribution to the development of Christianity. He was a former Pharisee who knew the Torah and followed its teachings as much as he could. He identified himself as the apostle to the Gentiles. He was a true missionary who went about making disciples of Christ and founding churches.

### Servanthood in Corinth

Paul's argument is that he, Apollos, and Cephas are only servants. The Greek word translated as servant is *huperetes*, which literally means under rower. The *huperetes* were slaves who sat in the belly of the large ships and pulled on huge oars to move the ship through the sea. These servants were literally bound by chains and figuratively bound by the will of the master of the

ship. Paul argues that these men (Apollos, Cephas, Paul) who are being so highly esteemed by the Corinthians are under rowers bound by the will of the master of the ship, Christ. It is a mistake to try to elevate one of these servants above the other. They are all bound slaves, on the same level and accountable to the same master.

But in the same sentence Paul uses another loaded word in reference to the same people he calls under rowers. The word is *oikonomos*. The *oikonomos*, translated as *steward* in the NRSV, was another kind of servant who was subject to the master like the *huperetes* was. Although still a slave, the *oikonomos* was placed in charge of the master's house or estate. The *oikonomos* was given a lot of latitude. He supervised the staff, ran the whole operation for the master, and even attended to the master's most significant charge—the children. As supervisor, the *oikonomos*' activities were not closely monitored and therefore, he had to be trustworthy.

### Greek word *Huperetes*, which means slave.

*Huperetes* (hoo-pey-ree-teys) is a compound word from the preposition *hupo* meaning under or beneath and *eretes*, a rower. The *huperetes* is the subordinate who waits to accomplish the commands of his or her superior. Some synonyms are servant, attendant, minister, deacon, or slave.

### Greek word *Oikonomos* meaning steward

*Oikonomos* (oy-ko-no-mus) is another compound word from *oikos* meaning *house* and *nemo* meaning *to deal out* (or distribute or apportion). An *oikonomos* is an administrator, a person who manages the domestic affairs of a family, business, or minor. He or she is a treasurer, a house manager, an overseer or a steward. Such a person has authority over the servants or slaves of a family to assign their tasks and portions. Such person is himself a slave (Luke 12:42; Genesis 15:2–3).



5. How are Paul, Cephas, and Apollos bound? How are we like or unlike these men? Are we bound?
6. What do you find exciting about the concept of an oikonomos/steward? In your opinion, what do you find challenging about being an oikonomos? Why is it important for the oikonomos to be trustworthy?

## LITERARY READING

Literary reading encourages us to enter the story's world and ask questions of the text that help us understand and appreciate it better. The Christian scriptures are composed of several forms of writings. One of these is the letter form. Although the entire Bible is considered by some to be a love letter from God to humankind, there are writings in the Bible that are unmistakably letters. The book of 1 Corinthians is one of such writings.

7. What clues do we have that 1 Corinthians is a letter? How do you tell this literature apart from other forms of writings, say a Gospel or a historical book?

This section of text is like a paragraph in a letter. A paragraph is a subdivision of a text intended to separate ideas.

8. What is the idea that comes before this in the text? What idea follows?
9. What is the idea that Paul tries to convey in this particular text? How do the ideas come together? How does stewardship relate to the three ideas?
10. How are you a steward?

## LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL READING

Lutherans believe you can find two basic messages in the Bible, namely, law and gospel. The law is the

sense of accusation or command. It accuses us, tells us of our shortcomings, or reminds us of what we ought to be doing. The gospel is that comforting word of God's love from God. It is the word that tells us what God has done for us. These two understandings run hand in hand. Law passages are not necessarily set aside from gospel passages. The two are usually in the same text. Law and gospel must be held together in order for the text to achieve its purpose.

### READ AGAIN 1 CORINTHIANS 4:1-5.

11. What is the law in the text? What is the gospel in this text? In what ways does the text confront us? In what ways does the text comfort us?

### Word study on the word *servant* (*huperetes*)

The word *servant* in the NRSV does not do its Greek counterpart justice. *Huperetes*, the Greek word translated *servant* in the NRSV is closer to *slave* in meaning than it is to servant. A servant has some degree of freedom. His freedom was envied by the slave. In a culture such as ours in which freedom is practically worshipped, being called a slave is not good news. Paul calls himself and the other men in this community who are being so highly esteemed, slaves.

A *huperetes* as the under rower was physically chained to the ship in order to prevent escape and legally bound to the master of the ship to enforce the law and command loyalty.

12. How can the idea of being bound shape and form your perception of being a steward of all that God has given you? How does that form your thinking and discussion of stewardship? What does it mean to be a steward?



One other question Lutherans like to ask when they read the Bible is what in the text shows forth Christ. They ask “What in this particular text points us toward Christ and helps us to know him and love him better?” Paul speaks of being stewards of God’s mysteries. This is quite a leap from being slaves. There is a bit of freedom involved here. The steward, though still a slave is a supervisor who has lost his chains. She or he is bound to the master but not to the equipment. His/her loyalty is to the master. She or he has the freedom to move around and make sure things are running to the liking of the master. So stewardship—flows out of being bound (without chains) to the master.

## BEFORE YOU GO

Using the invitation method of discussion, work on this last exercise.

- A. Let the group develop a working definition of stewardship. While someone in your group leads the discussion, have someone else write on a chalkboard or flipchart or piece of paper the ideas that come from the group.
- B. We can agree that stewardship is often uncomfortable to talk about. Can your group agree on one or two ways to comfortably talk about stewardship in the church?

Identify two people who will take your ideas to the stewardship committee or the pastor.

## CLOSING

### Prayer

God, you have called us into partnership with you and have entrusted us with so much! We thank you for your generosity. Help us to be trustworthy stewards by being responsible. We pray in Christ’s name. Amen.

## Song (Select one)

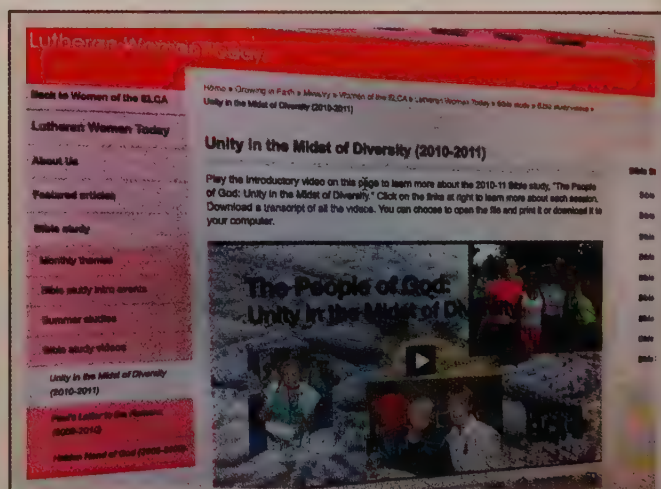
“Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise” *ELW* 205, *WOV* 623

“Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ” *ELW* 674, *TFF* 232, *WOV* 754

## LOOKING AHEAD

Some have bought into the erroneous teaching that spiritual gifts are given to a select group of people and that such people are spiritually superior to others. This was a cause for division in the Corinthian church in Paul’s day. We will focus on spiritual gifts in our next session. To prepare, you may want to read Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12–14, and Ephesians 4:11–13. 🌿

The Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo, M.S., and the Rev. Jensen Seyenkulo, Ph.D., live in the Chicago area. Linda is pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Park Forest, Ill., and Jensen is director for rostered and authorized leadership in the ELCA Vocation and Education unit.



To meet the Bible study authors, visit [www.lutheranwomantoday.org](http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org). There you can view brief videos of the Seyenkulos talking about the sessions.





ET US PRAY

## Grace and Gratitude

y Julie K. Ageson

### Reading stories about

Paul's early journeys reminds me of his dramatic life. This devout Jewish man experienced a blinding encounter with God while traveling to Damascus. A self-described persecutor of Christians, Paul's conversion was radical.

In some mysterious way, Paul came face to face with a loving God, a God more interested in forgiveness and grace than in adherence to rules. He describes having seen the Risen Christ: "... *as to one untimely born, [Christ] appeared also to me*" and to having heard Christ's call. Paul spent the rest of his life proclaiming this Jesus whose sacrificial love for all of humanity and all of creation exceeds our wildest imaginings.

I grew up in parsonages, the daughter of another convert to Christianity. My father was reared in a home where religion was primarily about civic responsibility and adherence to a system of healing found in the Christian Science church. As a young adult preparing for marriage, Dad took instruction in the Lutheran church of my mother's family. There this fisheries biologist heard the words of grace that our tradition proclaims so well. It too was a radical encounter with grace and the love of a generous God. For Dad, it was life-changing. As my father subsequently graduated from seminary and was ordained into pastoral ministry, the story of God's unconditional love was the lens through which he proclaimed God's grace. He rarely talked about conversion and he never used his own life's story as

a way of giving credence to Christianity. God's love shown to us in the life and death of Jesus was THE story.

This is one of the ways I came to experience God's love, generosity, and grace. I knew Christianity was not about rules, being American, issues of morality, or "us and them." At home and at church, with family and with friends, I saw and heard and felt the mystery of God's love in Jesus. I knew it was radical then, I know that now.

I suspect Paul would say something similar. Only a few months ago as my dad continued to struggle with cancer, I heard him describe the shattering experiences of serving in World War II. Dad found in Christianity a way of looking at the world and making sense of things gone awry. But more than that, he—like Paul—came to know that nothing can separate us from God's love.

The prayers I pray most often are prayers of gratitude. Sometimes I'm overwhelmed by the wonder of God's love. I see it in creation, in one another, in the stories of Scripture. And I am grateful beyond words for the witness of Paul, the witness of my parents, and the witness of a church that proclaims such extravagant love, grace, and forgiveness. In this season of Thanksgiving, may we each take some time to reflect on the generosity of a God who showers us all with life and love! 🌿

**Julie K. Ageson** is coordinator of ELCA Resource Centers and director of the Resource Center for the Eastern North Dakota Synod.



# What Gives?

by Kathleen Kastilahn



THE GENEROUS WOMAN STANDS UP TO DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH. AND SHE'S POWERFUL.

The assignment for this article popped up in my e-mail inbox when I turned on the computer after running errands: "It's about women and philanthropy. And how women are better givers than men."

The news here isn't that this *is* news—but that studies by organizations devoted to promoting philanthropy now have the data to back it up. "[E]vidence supports the theory

that gender differences in philanthropy are indeed real," sums up the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University ([www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu)). It lists key points:

- > Single women are significantly more likely than single men to make a philanthropic gift.

- > Married women and men both are more likely to give than single men. Emily Hansen, Women of



the ELCA stewardship director, says she loves to use these statistics when she talks about giving. It's something to celebrate. We always knew about the desire of women to implement change and to make the world a better place. We also know that they've done that through their dollars. It's OK and good to talk about the power that comes through giving."

What women do you know of who've used their wealth this way? Here in Chicago, legends Jane Addams and Bertha Palmer stand out for what they accomplished in the 1890s, decades before women could even vote.

Addams, a single woman, used inherited money to found Hull House, the nation's most influential settlement house that offered innovative education programs for poor neighborhood residents, including many immigrants.

Palmer spent freely of the fortune of her husband, real-estate developer Potter Palmer, when she traveled to Paris to promote the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. She saw paintings of a then unknown group of artists, the impressionists. She was entranced. And she bought dozens. They now hang in the Art Institute of Chicago, for all to see and enjoy.

Social welfare and art, then. Add education. The environment. Politics. Health. Music. Issues in

law. "Women are the drivers of change in a lot of areas," Hansen said. Having money—and knowing that how they use their money can speed up that change—actually increases their impact.

### THINGS THAT MATTER

Some women today doubtless have wealth that matches or surpasses that of Addams and Palmer, and some also will spark spectacular change. What's different today is that more women, lots more, have *some* money. Consider two more statistics that professionals in philanthropy find significant:

- > Women control 60 percent of the wealth in the country.
- > Women make 83 percent of household consumer decisions . . . including spending on charitable causes.

What matters to women, women can make matter to others. One-third of all women volunteer, according to a recent U.S. Department of Labor report. And a strong connection between volunteering and contributing has been shown in studies by philanthropy consultants.

But here is where it's important to see how giving springs from the rest of living, particularly our living as followers of Christ.

Hansen recommends pondering Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be trans-

formed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." That passage from Paul gives both good encouragement and sober warning to anyone embarking on a project that challenges the status quo of society.

Sometimes, perhaps most times, it takes meeting with other women, in study and in prayer, to discern the will of God. And from that comes the strength of collaboration. Other times it might be necessary to follow Martin Luther's much-quoted advice to "trust God and sin boldly," forging ahead to fund a project that meets a need others don't recognize.

### WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS

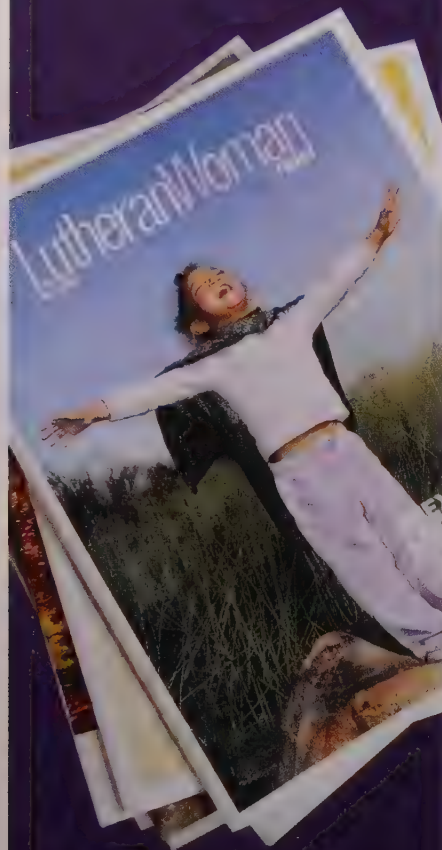
Many women tell Hansen it's important that their children become good and generous. "This happens when the mothers model that," she says, adding that in this mix women's stewardship activities also influence the philanthropic habits of their partners.

Some of the transforming that a woman hopes to bring about *through* her giving happens first to her *in* her giving, Hansen believes.

That's also the view of Mark Allan Powell, author of *Giving to God* (Eerdmans, 2006). It's possible, he points out, to correctly



# FEED THEIR FAITH



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read—but completely misunderstand—what Jesus tells us about giving. “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be” (Matthew 6:21) seems to support the philanthropy experts who find that women, particularly, give to those causes and organizations where they already are involved as volunteers.


But Powell, professor at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, advocates reading Jesus’ words. And what you hear is: Where you put your treasure, that is where your heart will go.

Powell sketched out how this works: “[H]ow we spend our money determines what sort of people we become. . . . Give to things that you *should* care about, and your generosity will awaken the caring in your heart that you hope to find there” (*The Lutheran*, November 2006).

That’s good news for women who aren’t yet generous givers, for those who are struggling to make ends meet in this tough economic climate, or for those who just haven’t found a project or cause that especially matters to them. Don’t wait, is Powell’s counsel.

And I’ll add that when you do give to those things you should care about, it’s true that your heart will lead you in caring. Responding generously becomes second nature. Particularly if *generously* doesn’t mean only *major money*—but includes a spirit of responding freely, as you are able, to needs you see.

It happened to me the morning I got this assignment. One of my errands was buying tokens for access to the Lake Michigan beaches that line my town. I needed only two, at \$22 each. But as I started to write my check, I saw a sign posted by the clerk’s desk that announced a city program to provide tokens for needy youths.

For 28 years, I’ve given time and money to our elementary school district clothing program that outfits 700 children each year. If I care to keep kids warm in the winter, how could I not care to let them cool off in the summer? I made out my check for \$66. Naturally. 

**Kathleen Kastilahn** is a writer, retired section editor for *The Lutheran* magazine, and member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Evanston, Ill.

Find out more about Women of the ELCA stewardship, planned giving, and other offering opportunities by visiting [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) and clicking on “Stewardship and Offerings.” Learn about the many ways you can support the women’s organization and be connected to the great work and ministry efforts of Women of the ELCA.



# BUILDING STEWARDSHIP: A DEVOTION

by Emily Hansen

## HYMN

"The Church's One Foundation"  
(vs. 1-2) *Evangelical Lutheran Wor-*  
*ship* 654

## READING

Corinthians 3:10-11

## REFLECTION

building stewardship: What does that mean? It means we build relationships, friendships, and partnerships. It means we build a community of faithful stewards living out our purpose and doing ministry together. To honor the foundation that has been laid and to build well upon it, we must be leaders in stewardship. The time we spend, the resources we commit, and the money we give are all expressions of generosity anchored in Christ's foundation.

We serve others because we are called to do so as God's disciples. We understand that stewardship is not just about money. It is an expression of our faith, and it is a communal experience. It is about building relationships with other people and other organizations so that in partnership we can build on the foundation and continue to do God's work.

Part of our purpose is to provide assistance to others through our offerings but also to help others recognize their own power through stewardship. It is through the work of stewardship and serving others that we see what an organization like Women of the ELCA can do. We must be willing to tell the good news, share what it means to be a part of a community of women, and counsel others about the potential power of their own stewardship.

## PRAYER

Abundant God, you have given us all that we need and we ask for the courage and commitment to give back all we can. Draw us together in the light of faith guided by you and empowered to carry out your work. I/We pray in hope, make all things new.

Creating God, as stewards of your earth and all its creatures, help us to continually care for your creation as we work to provide relief to all those affected by natural and human-made disasters, ensuring shelter, food, and clean water for all

those in need. I/We pray in hope, make all things new.

Counseling God, we look to you for guidance in the most unsettling of times. We pray for your care, counsel, and love for women and children who live amidst poverty, violence, and oppression, that they know healing and wholeness. I/We pray in hope, make all things new.

Daring God, we are called to be bold servants of your will, and this day we remember the grounded witness of Katie Luther and the many women in our lives who boldly live out their faith in Jesus Christ. I/We pray in hope, make all things new.

Good and gracious God, hear these prayers we bring for the greater service of your kingdom. May our foundation in Christ continue to inspire us to eagerly respond to your call and to the needs of those around us. Amen.

## HYMN

"The Church's One Foundation"  
(vs. 4-5) *ELW* 654 

**Emily Hansen** is director for stewardship for Women of the ELCA.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about our new Thankoffering service, visit [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) and click on Stewardship and Offerings.



# NUDGED TO CONNECT

by Terri Lackey

Sometimes gifts of the Spirit are revealed through an emissary. In Susan Haukaas' case, it was her youth minister, friends, and mom.

"During confirmation in eighth grade, my youth minister told me he thought I would be a good pastor," said the Women of the ELCA 2010-2011 scholarship recipient. Haukaas is finishing her master of divinity degree at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. "Throughout high school, other people encouraged me, and I began to feel that I was called to ministry."

Her mother, Marilou Bade of Twin Valley, Minn., also encouraged her to live in faith, and nudged her to connect with Women of the ELCA. "My mother is the initial reason I have been so connected to Women of the ELCA," Haukaas said. "First, because she was always involved with Women of the ELCA in the churches I grew up in."

And also because she showed her daughter how important Bible studies, women's meetings, and triennial conventions and gatherings were to her.

"She began encouraging me to think of myself as a Women of the ELCA participant," said Haukaas,

32. "I attended my first triennial with my mom in Washington, D.C., (1993) when I was in the ninth grade. Then, when I was in college, she encouraged me to join Women of the ELCA in the congregation I was attending."

After her mother helped her make her way into Women of the ELCA, Haukaas said she found other ways to become involved. She's attended triennial gatherings in Philadelphia (2002) and San Antonio (2005) as a recipient of a



*Susan Haukaas in India*

young women's scholarship. And in 2007, she was invited to be a part of Women of the ELCA Global Education program Women Building Global Community travel seminar to India, in partnership with the ELCA Global Mission companion synod program.

"What a joy it was to find faith in common with women from other

cultures and contexts," she said. "What a blessing to gather with women all over India to see their faith in action. How amazing it was to discover that women all over the world struggle with many of the same issues and to ponder ways we might help one another."

Haukaas said she has learned the value and power of women gathering in faith through participation in Women of the ELCA events. Yet her concern is that many younger women aren't taking advantage of these experiences.

"I've had amazing conversations and experiences and learned from the women I have met along the way," she said. "Yet, so often at conferences and synod gatherings I am the youngest woman in the room. This needs to change."

As a parish pastor, she hopes to help more women find their way into Women of the ELCA—as leaders and participants.

"I have a deep appreciation for the Women of the ELCA. My faith has been formed by all the wonderful women I have encountered through this extraordinary organization," Haukaas said.

## **vision for supporting women**

It is your gifts that have helped women of all ages experience Women of the ELCA. Thanks to you, Women of the ELCA awarded 25 women a total of \$31,000 through seven scholarship categories, according to Valora Starr, director for discipleship and coordinator of scholarships for Women of the ELCA. Predecessor women's organizations set up the scholarship endowment that that supports women academically, Starr said.

"When we award scholarships, we are reaping the benefits of women before us who had a vision for supporting women academically," Starr said. "Selecting the recipients each year is easy. Convincing women to honor our foremothers' vision by continuing to make a gift to the Women ELCA scholarship funds can be more challenging. There are so many more motivated and faithful women like these 25 recipients who need our support." Scholarships support a

diverse group of women, including second-career students, seminarians, female college faculty, and professional women on the road to career advancement. Various fields of study are represented, such as lay ministry, ordination, child development, social work, business, health sciences, and teaching.

Application materials for the 2011-2012 school year will be posted at [www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org) on December 1, 2010.

## **2010-2011 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS BY FUND AND SYNODICAL REGION**

### **Ordained Ministry Scholarship supported by the Chilstrom Fund**

Assists women who are second-career students at ELCA seminaries preparing for ordained ministry in ELCA congregations

► Susan Haukaas, 3C  
Bancroft, S.D.  
Wartburg Theological Seminary,  
Dubuque, Iowa  
Ordination process

► Holly Johnson, 2A  
Berkeley, Calif.  
Pacific Lutheran Theological  
Seminary, Berkeley  
Ordination process

### **Administrative Leadership**

#### **Scholarship supported by the**

**Arne Fund** Provides assistance to women interested in reaching the top of their field as an administrator

► Anne Marie Radke, 9B  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Wingate University, Wingate, N.C.  
Educational leadership

► Naomi Strand, 4B  
Salina, Kan.  
St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, Ind.  
Earth literacy

► Sister Cecilia Wilson, 7F  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
La Salle University, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Nonprofit management

### **Laywomen Opportunity Scholarship supported by the Drinkhall Franke/Seeley Knudstrup Scholarship Fund**

Assists mature ELCA laywomen prepar-

ing for an occupation in Christian service through a graduate course of study

► Linda Hartt-Smith, 1E  
Milwaukie, Ore.  
Namasté, Portland, Ore.  
Spiritual direction

### **Laywomen Opportunity Scholarship supported by the Amelia Kemp Fund**

Assists mature ELCA women of color in undergraduate, graduate, professional, or vocational courses of study

► Jada Dunwoody-Brent, 6F  
Columbus, Ohio  
Columbus State Community College  
Hospitality, chef program

### **Laywomen Opportunity Scholarship supported by Belmer Fund and Flora Prince Memorial Fund**

Assists women studying for ELCA service abroad



► Dawn Kaiser, 3D  
Lake Park, Minn.  
Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.  
Systematic theology, mission

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**Academic Leadership Scholarship supported by the Schmieder Fund**

Assists in the development of senior women faculty or staff at ELCA colleges and seminaries in the United States by attending a leadership institute

► Mary Carlsen, 3I  
Northfield, Minn.  
HERS Institute for Women in Higher Education,  
Wellesley College, Wellesley, Ma.

► Valerie Martin, 8E  
Selingsgrove, Pa.  
Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Mass.  
Management, leadership in education

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**Laywomen Opportunity Scholarships supported by Cronk, First Triennium Board, General, Mehring, Paepke, Piero/Wade, and Edwin/Edna Robeck Funds**

► Dawn Congdon, 9C  
Charleston, S.C.  
Trident Technical College, Charleston  
Associate's degree, nursing

► Jennifer Gabira, 2C  
San Clemente, Calif.  
Orange Coast College,  
Costa Mesa, Calif.  
Diagnostic medical sonography

► Stephanie Gordon, 5J  
Greendale, Wis.  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wis.  
Elementary/middle school education

► Heidi Lehman, 8D  
Pillow, Pa.  
Harrisburg Area Community College,  
Harrisburg, Pa.  
Radiology

► Lisa Paulson, 5L  
Holmen, Wis.  
Globe University, La Crosse Campus  
Business management, human resources

► Kimberly Ann Plata, 1B  
Everett, Wash.  
Everett Community College, Wash.  
Associate's degree

► Trina Schoenberg-Grube, 1C  
Bend, Ore.  
Oregon State University, Corvallis  
Teaching

► Elise Sobe, 6A  
Waterford, Mich.  
Marygrove College, Detroit  
Sacred music

► Terri Speirs, 5D  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Antioch University, Los Angeles, Calif.  
Creative writing

► Carla Standley, 4B  
Hazelwood, Mo.  
Grand Canyon University,  
Phoenix, Ariz.  
Elementary and special education

► Sherri Watson, 5C  
Normal, Ill.  
Heartland Community College,  
Normal, Ill.  
Certified nursing assistant

► Valerie Webdell, 6C  
Valparaiso, Ind.  
Valparaiso University, Ind.  
Deaconess program, formation

► Rhonda Wellner-Chiodo, 3H  
St Paul, Minn.  
Luther Seminary, St. Paul  
Christianity and world missions

► Donna Yeger, 7A  
Oceana View, N.J.  
College of Court Reporting,  
Hobart, Ind.  
Court reporting

► Joy Ziegeweid, 7C  
New York, N.Y.  
Columbia University Law School,  
New York, N.Y.  
Law

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Your gift to our scholarships program helps women continue their education. Send a check to Women of the ELCA, P.O. Box 71256, Chicago, IL 60694-1256. Include "scholarship endowment" on the memo line.



## WE RECOMMEND

## Resources for action, advocacy, programs, or further study

Compiled from sources including  
the ELCA News Service, Seeds for  
the Parish, and [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

### Films and study guides on hunger

ELCA World Hunger has created discussion guides on a variety of hunger related films for use in congregational hunger education and advocacy efforts.

Discussion guides are available for the following films:

- “Diary of Immaculee” (Rwandan genocide)
- “Energy Crossroads: A Burning Need to Change Course” (energy consumption)
- “Flow: How Did a Handful of Corporations Steal Our Water?” (water)
- “Guns, Germs and Steel” (poverty)
- “Human Footprint” (consumption)
- “King Corn” (food system)
- “Life + Debt” (Jamaica)
- “Renewal” (religious environmental movement)

ELCA World Hunger will loan some of these DVDs if you are interested in screening them. (Keep in mind that public performance rights vary greatly among films.) While World Hunger is not able to loan “Renewal,” it can be purchased for \$20 and includes public performance rights. Contact David Creech, director of hunger education, ELCA World Hunger (e-mail: [David.Creech@elca.org](mailto:David.Creech@elca.org) for screening information.)

For the free study guides, go to [www.elca.org/hunger/education](http://www.elca.org/hunger/education) and look for the “DVD Discussion Guides” section in the right-hand column.

### Welcome to the new church year

As you read in Calendar Notes, we are not continuing the column into the new

church year—Year A, which begins with the first Sunday in Advent (November 28). But if you want to follow the lectionary for Year A in your daily devotions, don’t worry. You can find the lectionary readings for Year A on the ELCA Web site at [www.elca.org/lectionary/a](http://www.elca.org/lectionary/a).

This church year calendar uses the *Revised Common Lectionary* as it appears in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. It includes the propers, additional readings for a number of festivals and occasions, as well as information from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Two series of readings are provided for the Time after Pentecost. The *complimentary series* provides Old Testament readings and psalms chosen for their relationship to the Gospels. The *semicontinuous series* provides Old Testament readings and psalms that, while not as explicitly connected to the Gospels, explore many of the books and stories not in the complimentary series.

### You can make a difference

If you are interested making, your community and the world a better place, you should consider attending Ecumenical Advocacy Days, March 25–28, 2011, in Washington, D.C. Sponsored in part by the ELCA, the event, What’s Gender Got to Do With It?, will address women’s issues in relation to development, security, and economic justice. To find out more, visit <http://advocacydays.org> or [www.elca.org/advocacy](http://www.elca.org/advocacy), then click on the Get Involved tab. There you will find ways to make a difference, including attending this event.



# Building Stewardship



Women of the  
**ELCA** 

For information about stewardship and giving opportunities to Women of the ELCA including our new fall stewardship resources, please call **800-638-3522, ext. 2730** or visit **[www.womenoftheelca.org](http://www.womenoftheelca.org)**



## RACE NOTES

## Creativity Abounds

by Linda Post Bushkofsky



## Of the many things for

which I am thankful, I list the creativity of women in the church. We are not only good stewards but we are also a very creative group. Lutheran women know how to make the food stretch, where to get good deals on supplies, and how to put together a great program.

Women of the ELCA at Our Saviour's Lutheran in Arlington Heights, Ill., where I'm a member, put together a great retreat this past summer. Perhaps our creativity will inspire you. We used the three-part Bible study on prayer written by the Rev. Gladys Moore that appeared in the summer issues of this magazine. Four of us formed the planning team. We had two guidelines—keep the planning simple and involve as many women as possible, especially in leadership roles. Our goal was to expose the women to many prayer experiences.

We tossed around some ideas and hatched a plan. We started the day using the Morning Prayer liturgy in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and incorporated several of the hymns suggested in the Bible study. Then we moved into sessions one and two.

After lunch we did a prayer walk through our church building, praying for the people who worship and serve there and the varied ministries that take place in our building. We started in the narthex and moved into the nave, then the prayer room, the nursery, a Sunday school room, the quilters' closet, etc. Many found this a particularly moving experience. Everyone participated in

reading the prayers, and it was great to walk around after lunch!

Then it was on to session three. After that we gathered again as a full group for a prayer sampler. We had five women speak for five minutes each about different prayer disciplines. We learned about the prayer shawl and healing touch ministries in our congregation. A teenager helped us explore dance as a means of prayer. We heard about prayer beads and labyrinths too. We moved into our garden for songs and a sending prayer.

To keep the meals simple, we arranged for a continental breakfast and box lunch from a local restaurant that delivered.

As the saying goes, many hands made light work, and all of us—even the planning team—could experience the event as a retreat. We had a bonus too—over half of the women who attended do not participate in Women of the ELCA, so it was a great opportunity for us to talk about our ministry.

At [www.lutheranwomantoday.org](http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org) you can find the 2010 and other summer studies. You don't have to wait until summer to use them. Maybe your group would like to do a retreat in February to break up the monotony of winter. Or maybe you'd like to create a Lenten retreat. Next summer, we'll have another three-part study on the triennial gathering theme, Renew, Respond, Rejoice! So get a couple of other women to plan a retreat and let the Holy Spirit move within you. 🌿

**Linda Post Bushkofsky** is executive director of Women of the ELCA.

The Eighth Triennial Gathering is July 1-17, 2011, in Spokane, Wash.

Find out more, visit

[www.womenoftheelca.org/triennial1](http://www.womenoftheelca.org/triennial1).





AMEN!

## Stewards of God's Mysteries

by Catherine Malotky

### Do you love me still,

God, even when my spiritual adolescence sends me deep into a pout? There are times when I long to be free of you, to not have to care about others or the earth, to hoard the creation for myself and establish myself as who I want to be, not who you made me to be.

There are times when I want to stamp my foot, slam the door, and walk out. There are times when the patience, forbearance, and equanimity you ask of me is too hard.

Like an adolescent, when I'm in this place, I reject your wisdom, your welcome, and your forgiveness, because I am sure I don't need it. I remember my own willful independence in those teen-aged years, and I observe them as the children I love move through them. Now, as an adult, I know how trying it is to be the one who is steady and firmly rooted when the youth around you need to find their wings. Is this how it is for you, God, when I'm sure I can go it on my own?

When I come to my senses, I know that I cannot be anyone but who you made me to be. I can try, but I'm doomed to fail. Why squander the beauty of the gifts you have given to me? It's such a waste. But there are times, and you know that, God. During those times, you continue to call to me, to invite me to leverage those gifts for the wellbeing of the world.

If identity is what I'm after, what better name could I desire to be called than "contributor"?

If fulfillment is what I'm after, what better result than "movement toward justice"?

If meaning is what I'm after, what better understanding than "peacemaker"?

If community is what I'm after, what better family than "body of Christ"?

Perhaps this is the mystery you call me to steward, that you love me and each of us regardless of our affection for or claim on you. Perhaps this is what it means to be bound to Christ, to not be able to get away. I am not bound to restrict me, but bound in order to give me a root for my blossoming. I need your nutrients, God. I simply cannot be without you.

Your faithfulness, God, your stewardship, is to persist in loving. You spend yourself for us. You choose abundance. We give thanks for your bounty in November, and soon after we begin the season of waiting for your most profound act of stewardship—becoming one of us. In Jesus, we know we can trust your largess.

Make me such a steward, God. Call me back when I stray into the illusion of independence. Sustain me with hope. Turn me toward the abundant gifts you have given me. Give me the courage to claim them; to choose abundance. Help me spend myself, and all that you have given me, for the sake of the world. Amen. 🌸

**The Rev. Catherine Malotky** serves the ELCA Board of Pensions as retirement planning manager. An ordained pastor, she has also been a editor, teacher, parish pastor, and retreat leader.





### Everyday Earth Day

Jeane Schremp and her husband, Paul, pick up four to six bags of trash as they walk along the Kalaloch Beach in Olympic National Park, Wash., where they camp in a motor home part of the year. "Every day is Earth Day to my husband and me," wrote Schremp, who said she really enjoyed reading the article "Creature Kindness" in the April 2010

issue of LWT. "Each day we stuff our jacket pockets with plastic bags and walk a different beach picking up whatever is human trash. This is not only for the beauty of God's creation but for the safety of the creatures that often mistake trash for food. Unable to digest it, they die of starvation. Nothing is too small to pick up." The Schremps are members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Garden Grove, Calif.

### LWT Editorial Office

For editorial feedback, magazine promotion questions, article suggestions, or advertising inquiries write or e-mail:

LWT Editorial Office

Women of the ELCA

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800-638-3522

[lw@elca.org](mailto:lw@elca.org) [www.lutheranwomantoday.org](http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org)

### Bible Study Resource Orders

Bible Study Leader Guides, Companion Bibles, etc.

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### Visit our Blogs

<http://blogs.elca.org/lwtmagazine>

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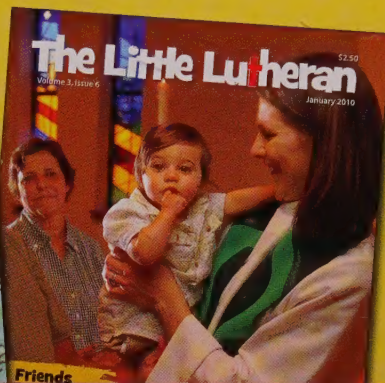
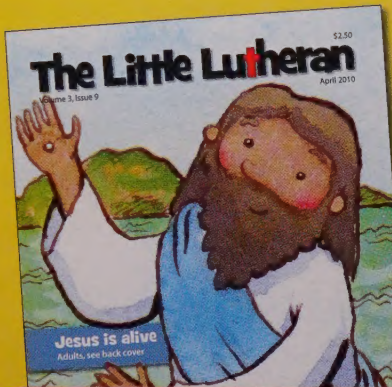
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# Share the gift of faith

**W**hat gift did you last give your grandchild, godchild or child? A toy truck? A doll? Why not send "mail from Jesus"? That's what

Zoe Spaid-Crow calls *The Little Lutheran*. She gets a sturdy, colorful magazine 10 times a year. The staff of *The Lutheran* pours Bible stories, prayers, songs and activities for children 6 and younger into each issue, so Zoe and others can come to know Jesus as their savior and friend.

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